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AUTHOR Alexander, Susan; Garcia, Celina
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ABSTRACT

Interviews with two educators who have been involved in peace education are the focus of this document. The interviews were conducted by a representative of the project group, "Preparedness for Peace," of Malmo, Sweden. This project studies ways of helping children and young people deal constructively with questions of peace and war. Susan Alexander, of the United States, who has been executive director of Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR), and Celina Garcia, of Costa Rica, who has been executive secretary of The Peace Education Commission of the International Peace Research Association (PEC), are the interviewees. Among the topics, each is asked about her views on peace education in general, specific efforts being made in her country or organization, and the role of teachers as peace educators. (DB)

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PEACE EDUCATION, SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Susan Alexander
Celina Garcia
and The Project "Preparedness for Peace"

The project group "Preparedness for Peace" at the Malmö School of Education in Sweden studies ways of helping children and young people to deal constructively with questions of peace and war. As part of this work, experts with special interest and competence in areas related to peace education are interviewed.

This publication presents such conversations with Susan Alexander (USA) and Celina Garcia (Costa Rica). Among other things, Susan Alexander has been executive director of ESR (Educators for Social Responsibility), and Celina Garcia has been executive secretary of PEC (The Peace Education Commission of the International Peace Research Association). – Interviewer: Åke Bjerstedt.

PEACE EDUCATION: A CONVERSATION WITH SUSAN ALEXANDER, FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EDUCATORS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

1.

AB: As an introduction, could you say a few words about yourself and your interest in the field of "peace education"?

SA: Concern with the nuclear arms race was in focus in the early 80s. I left teaching and became involved in Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR). Besides the nuclear issues, we emphasized the concepts of war and peace and ideas in our country about the Soviet Union. Now we see "social responsibility" as a broad concept; peace education can be regarded as one aspect of education for social responsibility.

2.

AB: What do you think of first when you hear the words "peace education"?

SA: I'm not particularly fond of the phrase "peace education" and never have been. I don't use it very much. First, it's a rather vague expression. Second, many people in this country associate it with appeasement or pacifism or leftism. We have usually avoided this expression within ESR.

3.

AB: If you think back on your own school days, were there some aspects in your schooling that might be considered an attempt at "peace education"?

SA: No. I went to school during World War II. It was an academic training with little attention to the affective aspects of education and no training in cooperative behavior. The closest we came to the area of peace education or education for social responsibility was in civics education. But on the whole, my answer must be "no".

4.

AB: Do you believe that schools in your country, as you know them today, contribute to a "peace education"?

SA: It's very difficult to generalize about schools in the United States due to the decentralized system. Peace education isn't something you would find everywhere, but you would find it in individual schools or school districts.

Our schools are structured more or less in the same way as they were a hundred years ago, and this structure isn't particularly conducive to cooperation or education for peace. It would be more correct to say that we have built-in structural violence. There is a strong movement now, however, to change the structure of schools, since business and industry recognize that people who have gone through school have not learnt to cooperate or to develop creative ideas.

Global education is now talked about quite a bit in the United States and isn't considered particularly controversial. Global perspectives are included, and the focus is upon learning to understand foreign cultures. But there is little attention to development education, to the third-world issues and the more difficult problems of a new economic world order.

AB: To what extent are there official recommendations that peace education should be dealt with in schools?

SA: Some states have such recommendations: Louisiana, Wisconsin, California. You will also find such recommendations in some cities or other areas: the city of Baltimore, Maryland; Cambridge and Brookline, Massachusetts; and Dade county, Florida.

However, ESR as an organization doesn't seek to have this kind of education mandated through official texts, because in our educational system such top-down mandates aren't very effective.

5.

AB: Do you think it is at all possible for schools to contribute to a "peace education"? If so, what are some of the steps and measures to be taken that you think of first?

SA: I think it's possible. In this country it has to be a grass-root effort as a start. It has to come from the bottom up and has to include the parents and the local community. It has to include some of the school administrators in the local community and it has to include students.

AB: If you think of the steps and measures as things to be done in the classroom, what would be some of the things that the teacher might do in order to reach the goals of peace education?

SA: There are different ways of looking at that. Peace education is primarily a process, not a content. Of course it's content also, because you have to have a content to which you apply the process. But if you think of peace education as a process, then you can teach everything - mathematics, physics, music etc. - using the process of peace education, where you work with collaborative and cooperative methods, treat people as if they have dignity, employ non-authoritarian techniques and techniques in the classroom that empower the students to have a voice and an opinion. They should be empowered to have an opinion on things that really matter, not just on the Mickey-Mouse things (like deciding on what to put up on the bulletin board), but really having a say, for example on the kind of exams that you might give in mathematics. I think part of the process of peace education involves being more interested in questions than in answers, and so you could use inquiry techniques no matter what you teach: biology, French etc.

I would also like to think of social responsibility education as a process. The teacher doesn't have to have a pre-set idea of what the issues are that

students must be interested in. He or she shouldn't be forcing the issues down the student's throat, but rather say: These are the social issues in the world today - these are the urgent ones; it's important that you take responsibility for something. You need to take responsibility after you have informed yourself, you should figure out what you think and what you believe and then take a stand. This is possible to do in any subject and in any classroom, from the first grade all the way to graduate school.

AB: Would you say that your organization, ESR, has this process emphasis, or is this more your personal view?

SA: I think the major difference between ESR and many of the other groups in the peace education area is that we emphasize it as a process more than others do.

6.

AB: What would be some of the possible differences in peace education approaches among younger and older students in schools?

SA: It's another way of asking what the relevant developmental stages are. We all know that the younger students developmentally have small circles in which they operate: the family, the neighborhood, the school, and probably nothing beyond that. They are not capable of abstract reasoning. So, with older students you can be more abstract. If you try to ask young elementary students about democracy (and democracy is an abstract concept), they couldn't respond to it except by giving concrete examples. So I think that is a key distinction - the concrete versus the abstract.

Another one is that issues need to be simplified with younger students. That frightens me, because I think most issues, including peace issues, are complex, and some of them are deeply complex. This is particularly true for the use of violence.

On the other hand, I think that young children can be made aware of the garbage they create and discuss the environmental issues related to this. Sometimes

people think that singing peaceful songs with younger students is a sort of peace education. I cannot really agree with that. It's very nice and can be very important, but there are two words to "peace education", and the second one is "education". For me, this is not particularly education.

AB: Do you see education related to values as important for peace education, and how does this relate to age differences?

SA: Non-violence would be an example of such a value. Some would say that transcending violence is basic to the concept of peace education. It's very easy for white Westerners to say that non-violence should be an absolute value, but do I have the right to say that to blacks in South Africa - who have been suffering under Apartheid? The same is true with the Palestinian intifada. It's so easy, especially in retrospect, to say that non-violence is an absolute value that we should teach for, and there is a part of me who believes that. On the other hand, I know that the only thing that's making the world take Palestinians seriously is that they did engage in a violent uprising. Until they did, nobody paid any attention to them.

So what I'm trying to say is that even a value that means so much to me as non-violence does is more complicated than it seems at first, and I think that's true of every value, especially the ones that we are passionate about ourselves.

AB: And what do you conclude from that as to the education in school?

SA: With the students I would examine the values this way. I think what you find in this country with students as they start off, most would accept those values. As a teacher, it's my job to complicate their thinking and take that certainty away from them for a while, and question those values and say: Are you sure? But what about this? I should make them test those values in some sort of baptism of fire emotionally

and intellectually, and then come back to them after that. They shouldn't be left with "easy values" which they have never tested. For us in America, so many of our values never get tested.

So I think then that in values education it would be important for all the students to explore values, ask why they are important, and try to make them more complex. Then they should choose again in the light of the awareness of the full complexity. You eventually have to choose to be human, but you must do so, I think, in the light of full awareness of information of what's involved.

7.

AB: <u>If you were an upper-secondary school teacher in a subject with which you are particularly familiar, how would you like to make the students more conscious of and more prepared for problems of peace, within that subject</u>?

SA: Literature and writing are particularly amenable to that. There isn't a single piece of good literature that doesn't have at least one major, significant conflict in it, and that's a wonderful opportunity to look at a conflict: what a conflict seems to be about on the surface, what it really is about, how it came about and how it was resolved. You can do this with first-grade reading books as well as with the graduate school Moby Dick. How are the characters handling the conflict; was this the best possible solution; are there other solutions? You could also try to use simulations of the conflict in the classroom.

There's a lot of great literature, particularly non-modern literature, about war, starting with the Iliad and the Bible. What I did when I was teaching was to use a lot of texts that had war as a topic, starting with the Iliad and ending with Catch 22, and looking at the enormous change in the way war is characterized and in the way the hero interacts with war.

AB: How would you like to have the students work with this literature?

SA: Among other things, we would be looking at the values expressed and discuss whether they are relevant to the problems of today and to their own lives. We would also examine popular films and television shows in the same way, with a focus on the values. We would use these materials for discussions on human rights, oppression, sexism and racism.

There are a lot of archetypal patterns through history related to violence. For example, all cultures and all ages seem to have some initiation rituals around the age of 13, to indicate that people have come of age. Mostly they are violent. We should ask: Can you enter manhood without passing a violence test? What would we use instead - getting your driver's licence? And where are the women anyway in all this?

I'd like to make a statement at the beginning of a course saying: Most courses using great literature for social studies in America have been taught by going from war to war to war, from battle to battle to battle. We're not going to do that any more. We don't need any more exposure to war values. Why don't we try to organize this course in a totally different way? Is it possible to find great literature that we can use in our courses - European literature, Russian literature and American literature - that is not always evolving around proving your manhood in war? Can we teach history in the U.S. by looking at history as if periods of peace were the norm, and when the norm broke down there was a war?

8.

AB: In international debates, the terms "disarmament education" and "peace education" have been used, in addition to some other related terms ("global education", "education for international understanding" etc.) Do you have any comments and preferences as to this terminology?

SA: Almost nobody in the U.S. would use "disarmament education". In Europe I see it being used, however. In this country you can't do advocacy education. Disarmament education means to advocate disarmament - and this is not seen to be legitimate. To us, "educate" means to explore all points of view in all their complexity and then figure out how to make sense to yourself of all the contrasting viewpoints.

AB: Could you think of using the expression "education for peace", indicating that it would be more legitimate to advocate peace than disarmament?

SA: Probably not. At least many people in this country would interpret it like this: Oh, you mean: If the Russians try to take over, you just lay down your arms and let them capture you. - "Education for international understanding" is much less threatening. Nobody is against international understanding - it isn't controversial at all. But international understanding will not include human rights, it doesn't mean developing the third world. It will not lead to a more peaceful world.

AB: So, in fact, you don't like any of these terms?

SA: That's right. There are no problems with "global education" in the U.S., but I just think it means something else.

AB: So the term that you would prefer, would that be the term that you use in your organization?

SA: Yes, education for social responsibility.

9.

AB: In many countries, questions related to disarmament and peace are highly controversial. Would you anticipate any difficulties, for example with parents or other members of the community, when introducing peace education in schools? If so, what kind of difficulties? Do you see any way out of such problems?

SA: Yes, not only do we anticipate such difficulties. We have experienced them for years: difficulties in

trying to introduce education about these issues. One of the difficulties is that in the United States you have a million different special-interest groups, and each one has its own little cause, and they all want to see them included in the school. There will be local pressure groups telling the local school boards: You have to teach about drugs. You have to teach about teenage pregnancy. You have to teach about AIDS etc. etc. The school board learns to resist: We cannot do all this. - Another difficulty is, of course, that peace education is seen as controversial.

AB: What is your organization's way of handling this?

SA: One of the ways that we have used is to find the people who show resistance or uneasiness or who disagree and bring them right into the planning-group - bring them into the work with developing curriculum materials, to listen to their message. What are your problems with our approach? We try to use the viewpoints, honor them, give them dignity. We are then modelling peace education in our relationships, honoring the questions of the opponents, respecting their feelings. If we don't listen to the opponents, in fact, we perform an act of violence. So this strategy can be seen as an important part of peace education.

10.

AB: <u>What needs to be done in teacher training in order to prepare future teachers more adequately for the area of "peace education</u>"?

SA: There is much to be done. ESR itself is involved in teacher training by having one-week or two-week institutes, usually in the summer.

AB: Do you do this together with schools of education or independently?

SA: ESR is now doing nearly all of it <u>with</u> universities, schools of education etc. And one policy is this: Instead of talking about the community as part of

peace education, we try to build a community. First of all, we'll never start a conference without going around among the participants listening to their wishes and expectations. We try always to model everything we talk about. We don't only talk about cooperative behavior, but we present teachers with skills for cooperation they can both acquire themselves and use with their students. The participants write down what their own goals are for the institute, and our ambition is to grade them according to how close they come to the goals they have set for themselves. Our procedures aren't easy. However, when it's too easy, I get suspicious. Real teacher training should be very hard and very tough.

11.

AB: In many schools, the students represent a variety of nationalities and cultural backgrounds. To what extent would it be possible to use this fact as an aid in education for peace? Would you expect some difficulties in doing so?

SA: Because of the immigration that we always have, we are more or less forced to deal with a multi-cultural situation in the classroom. There are immigrants coming in constantly, and you can help young people think about how to take responsibility for those real people in their real communities and in their own classrooms. That's part of peace education. When the Cambodians move into our neighborhood and attend school with us, it's natural to think about: What are their rights, the Cambodians' rights, and what are our responsibilities? The problems with human rights, when dealt with abstractly, are often that one talks about rights and doesn't make the point that we need a corresponding responsibility. So it would be a wonderful opportunity with different nationalities and cultural differences within the school to explore rights and responsibilities in better balance.

There's a tradition in America of enormous in-

dependence and autonomy and self-reliance. There's no collective tradition in this country whatsoever. We have the frontier tradition and the "going-out-on-your-own" tradition, but there's no tradition of collective responsibility for others. The multi-cultural classroom might be seen as a fabulous opportunity to train the students to understand interdependence better.

12.

AB: Sometimes the term "global survival" is used to refer to an area dealing both with the risks of nuclear war and with the risks of far-reaching environmental damage through pollution and overuse of resources. How do you look upon dealing with these two categories of risks together in school? Do you have any suggestions as to how the teacher could approach the problem area of environmental damage?

SA: I think it's helpful to deal with them together, discussing planetary help, planetary well-being and planetary survival. I think the danger of dealing with them together is that, unless you have an awful lot of time, you might end up being superficial about both of them, and I worry about superficiality.

In one sense, I think that approaching the environmental damage is the easiest task that any teacher has ever been given, because it easily includes empowerment for all of us. When we were trying to stimulate action when dealing with nuclear weapons, the students could write letters and relate to it, but these actions usually had no effects. When dealing with the environment, on the other hand, there are a million meaningful things everyone can do - it's wonderful, it's terrific, it's fabulous for young people of every age. There are things that make sense for a first grader, and yet there are things that could be dealt with among the older ones. Usually it isn't very controversial.

I think, though, that as you proceed, you get into more complexity: Who else is damaging the environment besides me or us? Then you get to the Brazilians and their rain forests and the fact that they are saying: Wait a minute, you know, you North Americans expanded and you cut your trees all down. Now you are coming down and telling us "Don't do that". You have already done it: you only have a couple of trees left in Oregon and in Washington, and you have raised your standard of living by doing so. What do you mean; we can't cut our own trees? So as we proceed, we come to more controversial issues.

13.

AB: Is there anything else that you would like to add about the school and peace education?
For example: Perhaps you could tell me a little about the present activities in your organization ESR.

SA: We don't any longer have the emphasis on disarmament and nuclear weapons that we had in the start. But we are presently doing a series of small peace-related curriculum units (on some of the winners of the Nobel Peace Prize). We cooperate with the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences in Moscow. We model teacher training together (for two-week institutes). Each year the site is alternated between our countries; this summer (1990) it will be Flint, Michigan. We have a small project on the Vietnam war. Finally, I might mention that we will now move into the field of environmental issues more extensively than before.

NOTES ON THE INTERVIEWEE

Susan M. Alexander. Address: 116 Manet Road, Chestnut Hill, MA 02167, USA. - Education: B.A., English, University of Connecticut; Ed. M., Graduate School of Education, Harvard University. - Work experience: English teacher, Wellesley High School, MA, 1968-1982; English instructor, Simmons College, MA, 1982-1984; Associate Director, Educators for Social Responsibility, 1982-1986; Executive Director, Educators for Social Responsibility, 1986-3/90; currently free-lance writer and educational consultant.

Selected publications:

(Ed.) Why nuclear education? A sourcebook for educators and parents. Cambridge, MA: Educators for Social Responsibility, 1984.

(With A. Shapiro.) The ESR-Soviet collaborative project. Educational Leadership, 1989, 46(4), 84-85.

PEACE EDUCATION: A CONVERSATION WITH CELINA GARCIA, COSTA RICA

1.

AB: As an introduction, could you say a few words about yourself and your interest in the field of "peace education"?

CG: I am Celina García from Costa Rica. I come from what is perhaps a unique country in the world - a disarmed country. I don't know of any other modern democratic country in the Western hemisphere where peace is a government institution; where people would never fear war. The emphasis in our country has always been on education. It seems difficult for people outside our country to imagine what it's like in a country where there is no army. The army was abolished in 1949 - symbolically, because there had never been any strong institutionalized military force.

For me, peace education is a very natural way of thinking. However, in Costa Rica, peace education doesn't exist as a separate subject. Whether we are peaceful because of our education or in spite of our education might be discussed. But at least, the culture of "civilism" - the culture of living as civilians - has been very strong in our country. It's important, I think, for people in the peace movement to know that there is a small, modern country in Latin America without an army in the midst of a part of the world characterized by oppression and militarism.

AB: What could be some of the historical reasons for this?

CG: It always seems easy to explain what has happened after the fact, but who could predict history? But historically, we were very poor, and I think poverty helped to save us from the rape of the Europeans. The country was inhabited by very few Indians - I think there were about 27,000 Indians when the Spanish arrived, and they made sure to kill many of them, or many of them died as a consequence of civilization, which is one of my

favourite expressions from Freire. Now only very few remain in the mountains.

But in general, there is a homogeneous ethnic background. We never had clashes of cultures as in many other countries. There were never clashes of religion. Since the people who founded Costa Rica were very poor farmers from Spain, nobody really paid any attention to us, which saved our lives. We were able to develop ourselves, practically isolated, very individualistically, with a very personal kind of culture, and with great respect for other people's ideas and political views. The country enriched itself with persecuted political refugees from outside. The people who found a home of freedom in Costa Rica enriched our educational and political life enormously.

Our first president was a teacher, and that is very meaningful to our history. I would say: If there is something important in our history, the fact that our first president was a teacher, behaved like a teacher, talked like a teacher and acted like a teacher was very, very important.

AB: What about your own background and interest in the area of peace education?

CG: I'm a philosopher by undergraduate education, and then I studied sociology in the United States. I lived and worked in New York for about 15 years - this is why I have a horrible New York accent. When I lived in New York, I worked a lot in the slums - in Harlem. At the time, there was a federal program that was to fund community programs. Cities who had a lot of racial problems received money for work in inner-city neighborhoods. I worked with programs for parents of Spanish and Latin American background, particularly with people from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and Cuba.

I think that this work is related to my interest in work for justice and peace. Meeting Quakers was very important, and also meeting many people who

at that time were working in the peace movement because of the Vietnam war. I had a very close friend - Roger Woock - who now lives in Australia; he had done a Ph.D. thesis on peace education, and that attracted my interest. He is a professor in Australia right now. So meeting Roger and his wife at the time (they are divorced now) and many of the people who were deeply interested in the peace movement was important to my own development.

I heard about IPRA in the late 70s, and I began to do some research in IPRA. Then I have done teacher training in peace education in Costa Rica, and I have worked for the University for Peace.

2.

AB: What do you think of first when you hear the words "peace education"?

CG: Total social transformation, total social revolution - that is peaceful, non-violent, but a total transformation. I don't believe in reformations. I think habits of violent solutions are very deeply ingrained in our persons, in our families, and in our social structures, so at least we need to try to bring about a radical transformation. When I think about peace education, I think about total transformation. I don't have all the answers on how to do this, but this is my image and ambition.

3.

AB: If you think back on your own school days, were there some aspects in your schooling that might be considered an attempt at "peace education"?

CG: I was very fortunate to be my mother's daughter. My mother was my teacher in the 5th and 6th grade, and she was also the school principal after that. My mother was a definite influence. She was a very outspoken woman for human rights, for women's rights. At that time, I think she was considered very revolutionary (as were other female members of our

family - one of them was the second woman who got a driver's licence, and she was thrown out of the town). My mother was a very strong and very literate woman. She was able to distinguish right from wrong immediately, and I think that, to me, is an important part of peace education: to be able to make a decision based on value priorities when you have two or more options.

AB: Besides this influence from your mother, were there some aspects that you would call peace education in your school?

CG: It's very difficult to distinguish what is peace education in a country that is peaceful. There was a lot of freedom, and to me that is peace. We may not have peace research theory or specific peace education elements. What we do is live it. If you invest the budget of your country in education, in public health, in helping the poor, to me this is living peace education. I'm not saying we are perfect, but we don't use our money to feed a military elite or to have military schools or expensive arms; instead we choose to use that money for public service, such as roads and telephones.

4.

AB: Do you believe that schools in your country, as you know them today, contribute to a "peace education"?

CG: There has been a law through which human rights are going to be taught in all grammar schools. There is always an emphasis on teaching special things that have to do with freedom and rights, civil rights, political rights, human rights. In that way: Yes.

AB: But there is no direct recommendation that you should deal with peace education?

CG: Yes, there is at this moment. There are recommendations to use peace education, and we have to be careful to follow that up in various areas of education. There is a need to make a revision of school texts, for there is sexism. But this is a constant thing

going on in Costa Rica. We are never really satisfied with what we have, so we try to improve the level of education. If we had traditional books, where some war heroes were very emphasized - well, I'm sure there is somebody looking into that. There is a constant revision.

5.

AB: Do you think it is at all possible for schools to contribute to a "peace education"? If so, what are some of the steps and measures to be taken that you think of first?

CG: Definitely yes, schools could do it. But, I think, first we should be very careful to get rid of all our pre-conceptions of what education means. For me, peace education - as I said before - is a total transformation, and we should begin to transform ourselves, to leave behind all the patterns of sexism and racism, to leave the patterns of making a division between those who have our type of education and those who don't have type of our education. I think we should come down from our pedestal of self-glorifying knowledge that separates us from those wrongfully called illiterate. When we build up an education that is acceptable to all of us, as a human family, to me that would be the first steps towards peace education. And I think maybe Costa Rica would be an example of a country that would do it. Maybe in the next 25 years, we may have gained a lot in many areas: liberating ourselves from sexism - that's a great step; liberating ourselves from racism; and establishing some kind of an education that is more adapted to the needs of our century, taking care of the environment too.

6.

AB: What would be some of the possible differences in peace education approaches among younger and older students in schools?

CG: It's known that smaller children learn more by games,

by role-playing and by theatre. We all benefit from that, too, but I think as they grow a little older, you can use more of the boring theory, whereas when you deal with the younger grades, you can let the children have a lot of fun by role-playing, by simulation and by theatre.

AB: Has it been an issue whether or not you should deal with war, especially nuclear war, in the school?

CG: In Costa Rica we study it, but in Costa Rica the nuclear bomb is felt to be so remote. Some of the teachers that I have done training with use the famous story of the little girl in Hiroshima, Sadako. When they use that, the kids cry and sympathize with the girl, but they cry about it in the same way they would cry about children who have lost their mother. There is no general understanding of what nuclear threat is in Costa Rica. It just doesn't sink into our minds; most people don't really understand the potential of total nuclear devastation. However, there is a great awareness in some circles. For instance, they were going to have an atomic lab at the University of Costa Rica, and they refused it. They don't want to have anything to do with nuclear energy.

7.

AB: <u>If you were an upper-secondary school teacher in a subject with which you are particularly familiar, how would you like to make the students more conscious of and more prepared for problems of peace, within that subject</u>?

CG: Let's take Central America, for instance. If I were teaching about the problems of Central America, I'd like the students to conduct the class first, to give ideas. Usually, what is easily accessible also in poor areas is newspapers and radio news. The way many teachers handle it is starting by bringing news to the classroom, and from there they can take up different activities such as making simulations, for example on human rights. The Inter-American Court

for Human Rights is in Costa Rica, and they were making an investigation of the violation of human rights in Honduras, and two of the witnesses were shot before they were asked to give testimony. So I would gather all the information on that, and then I would ask one of the students if he or she wanted to be the judge: What would you do if your witnesses were shot? Do you know any other similar situation? Then we would make a simulation on this topic. Some of the students can write a dialogue, and they can have a little play around a very important subject. Some may go home and get more information. Some may have relatives in Honduras and bring us personal information. Others may bring information on the history of the violation of human rights in Honduras. So then you can have a whole book made up by the class on just one particular subject, involving the students very actively in the process.

8.

AB: In international debates, the terms "disarmament education" and "peace education" have been used, in addition to some other related terms ("global education", "education for international understanding" etc.). Do you have any comments and preferences as to this terminology?

CG: They are certainly not the same, and I think they should all be used to describe the variety of approaches in our profession. You could also talk about education related to international law, for instance - that is also an important part of peace education. I like to think about peace education in terms of radical peace education. The other expressions represent different emphases that should remain separate, under what I consider the umbrella: Peace education.

AB: When you use the term "radical peace education", what do you primarily think about?

CG: For me radical peace education is education that is

very critical of traditional education as it has been reserved for a privileged minor group.

9.

AB: In many countries, questions related to disarmament and peace are highly controversial. Would you expect some difficulties, for example with parents or other members of the community, when introducing peace education in schools? If so, what kind of difficulties? Do you see any way out of such problems?

CG: In Costa Rica, people want more materials, more speakers etc. in this area. That would be the only difficulty that I have met. I've never heard of parents or others who don't want it. I'm sure there are some, but I've never heard of anybody. It isn't controversial in the same way as I know it is in Europe.

10.

AB: What needs to be done in teacher training in order to prepare future teachers more adequately for the area of "peace education"?

CG: In general, I think teachers need to have more training in creative ways of using non-violence within the classroom, within the school system, within the educational system. They need to be more aware that peace begins at home and home is the classroom, that the injustices done to their students is a real problem that has to be dealt with. We tend to ignore it - we are telling our students by our actions that we don't care, and then we say that we love peace, that we love disarmament - I'm talking about this now from my point of view in Costa Rica. It's very nice that we are so peace-loving generally, but when a teacher makes the choice of not addressing himself or herself to the needs of their students who suffer from nearby violence, sexism or racism, there is a problem. We have to be models continuously, and we have to hold on to values. In our era we are too afraid to say: This is right and this is wrong, but we know it from our

constitutions, we know it from our religions, and we know it from all the international agreements that we have signed. Applying human rights in our classrooms and caring are very important. I think we should develop a new teacher with ability to display sensitivity and support.

11.

AB: Is there anything else that you would like to add about the school and peace education?

CG: Those of us who work on peace education in different countries should establish networks of support. Nowadays we have, for example, videocassettes that we could exchange, so that we can really begin demonstrating peace education in a more concrete kind of way. Some of us who work in peace education are rather isolated from each other, and sometimes we say: Oh, my God, is anybody listening? So I feel that we need international support, too. I hope that we will begin to tell each other what we are doing in a more personal way.

Note: This interview was carried out in Rio de Janeiro, August 1988. Celina García was the Executive Secretary of PEC (the Peace Education Commission of the International Peace Research Association) from August 1988 to July 1990. Her present address is: P.O. Box 8-4820, 1000 San José, Costa Rica.

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